

Message Text

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TO ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 288022

LIMDIS - JOHANNESBURG FOR REGIONAL LABATT

FOLLOWING GENEVA 8799 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO USUN BELGRADE
NOV 5; REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 8799

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, ILO

SUBJECT: ILO: TACTICAL LESSONS FROM THE MARITIME SESSION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL LABOR CONFERENCE - OCTOBER 13-29

PASS LABOR FOR SEGALL, HOROWITZ, LINSENMAYER AND GOLDBERG (BLS)

PASS COMMERCE FOR ASST SECY BLACKWELL

REF: (A) GENEVA 8547 (B) GENEVA 8008 (C) GENEVA 8062

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1. SUMMARY: EVENTS AT THE RECENT MARITIME SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR CONFERENCE (ILC) SUGGEST THAT WE NEED TO PREPARE WELL IN ADVANCE FOR THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF THE ANNUAL ILC AND ITS COMMITTEES NEXT JUNE AND THAT THE FOCUS OF U.S. EFFORTS SHOULD BE ON AFRICAN MEMBERS OF ILO FROM WHOSE RANKS THE NEXT ILC PRESIDENT WILL BE CHOSEN. MISSION SUGGESTIONS FOLLOW IN PARA THREE BELOW. END SUMMARY

2. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT U.S. INFLUENCE ON IMEC AND OTHER MEMBERS OF ILO RESULTED IN THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE POLISH CANDIDATE AND IN THE ELECTION OF A WESTERN EUROPEAN PRESIDENT OF THE MARITIME SESSION OF THE ILC. ALSO NOTEWORTHY WAS THE ANNOUNCED INTENTION OF THE EASTERN BLOC TO STAND FOR THE PRESIDENCY IN FUTURE ILC'S (REF B) BECAUSE THIS UNDERMINES RECENT PRACTICE IN ILO OF AUTOMATICALLY GIVING THE GOVERNMENT VICE PRESIDENCY OF THE ILC TO AN EE COUNTRY. THE WILLINGNESS OF THE GHANAIANS ON THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT TO CONSIDER CHALLENGING THE EASTERN EUROPEANS FOR THE VICE PRESIDENCY OF THE MARITIME CONFERENCE (EVEN THOUGH THIS WOULD HAVE DEPRIVED THE EASTERN EUROPEANS OF ANY SIGNIFICANT POST) SUGGESTS THAT THEY AND PERHAPS OTHER AFRICANS INTERPRET "EQUITABLE GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION" IN TERMS OF THEIR OWN INTERESTS, AND THAT THEY MAY BE WILLING TO CHALLENGE THE EASTERN EUROPEANS FOR THE VICE PRESIDENTIAL POSITION AT FUTURE CONFERENCES. LASTLY, DURING THE INFORMAL NEGOTIATIONS TO SEEK AGREEMENT ON COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIPS TO THE MARITIME CONFERENCE, IT WAS CLEAR THAT ALTHOUGH THE GROUP OF 77 WAS ACTIVE THAT IT IS A FORCE THAT CAN BE RECKONED WITH; THE REGIONAL GROUPS OF THE 77 HAD NOT CAUCUSED BEFORE THE CONFERENCE AND DURING THE CONFERENCE MOST OF THEIR "COMMON INTERESTS" GAVE WAY TO INDIVIDUAL DESIRES FOR COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIPS. THE AFRICANS, FOR INSTANCE, GAVE US TO UNDERSTAND THEY HAD BEEN DOUBLECROSSED BY THE MEXICANS; BOTH LATIN AMERICANS AND AFRICAN REPS WERE OPEN TO BARGAINING SUGGESTIONS.

3. IN THE LIGHT OF THE ABOVE, THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING TACTICS:

A - SINCE IT IS AFRICA'S TURN TO PROVIDE THE ILC
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PRESIDENT NEXT JUNE, WE MIGHT BEGIN SOON TO CONSIDER APPROPRIATE AFRICAN CANDIDATES (PREFEREABLY AT CABINET LEVEL). HOPEFULLY, WE WILL FIND CANDIDATES (1) ONE OF WHOM WILL BE SELECTED BY THE AFRICANS AS THEIR MAN; (2) WHO WILL MAINTAIN ORDER AND GAVEL DOWN SPEAKERS FOR INTRODUCING EXTRANEIOUS POLITICAL ISSUES AND (3) BE STRONGER THAN GEORGE LAMIN, THE LABOR MINISTER OF SIERRA LEONE, WHO HAS EXPRESSED PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE SOVIET

CONCEPT OF GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION (REF C) AND WHO HAS PLAYED GAMES WITH BOTH THE SOVIETS AND US.

B - AFTER THE MARCH GOVERNING BODY SESSION WHEN WE HAVE DECIDED WHICH, IF ANY, COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIPS WE WANT IN JUNE, WE MIGHT SOUND OUT OUR ALLIES AND THE THIRD WORLD TO SEE WHAT THE BARGAINING SITUATION ON CHAIRMANSHIPS WILL BE LIKE IN JUNE. POSSIBLY AN APPROPRIATE ASIAN OR LATIN AMERICAN CANDIDATE COULD BE PERSUADED TO CHALLENGE THE EE BLOC FOR THE GOVERNMENT VICE PRESIDENCY (BECAUSE THE WORKERS WILL NOMINATE THEIR VICE PRESIDENT FIRST, AND BECAUSE THE THREE VICE PRESIDENTS MUST BE OF DIFFERENT NATIONALITIES, WE WILL HAVE TO KEEP CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE WORKERS GROUP). SHOULD THE EE BLOC BE DEFEATED FOR THE GOVERNMENT VICE PRESIDENCY, WE WOULD BE CLOSER TO OUR OBJECTIVE OF GETING THE ILO MEMBERSHIP TO RECOGNIZE THAT THE EE COUNTRIES HAVE A RIGHT TO STAND FOR ELECTION BUT HAVE NO RIGHT WHATSOEVER TO BE ELECTED. CATTO UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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